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SIPDIS

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DEPARTMENT PASS TO USAID JEFF HUMBER

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DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC FOR REBECCA KLEIN

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SUBJECT: DECEMBER REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT NEWSLETTER, EAST AFRICA

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SUMMARY

1. (U) Summary: The December 2009 Regional Environment Office (REO) eastern Africa newsletter reports on a variety of environment, science, technology and health events that took place in Addis Ababa this month. From two U.S. university sponsored science and technology workshops and a Peace Corps environmental program strategy workshop, to following Africa's reactions to climate change developments in Copenhagen and reporting on events leading up to the next Nile Council of Ministers (NileCOM) meeting in Egypt, it was a busy holiday month for the environment office Addis. To view a copy of the REO newsletter online, visit our intranet site:

http://addisababa.state.gov/REO_Newsletter/default.asp?fname=2009. End summary.

EAST AFRICA ALTERNATIVE ENERGY BUZZ

¶2. (U) Kenya: A best practices model for policy makers: Geothermal development is characterized by high upfront costs and high upfront

risk. Couple this with high-risk business climates, and eastern Africa has had a difficult time attracting foreign investment to develop its substantial geothermal resources. Kenya is a country with limited energy resources. Unlike Ethiopia and others in eastern Africa, they lack the massive potential that hydropower represents.

As such, the GoK began a campaign to develop its geothermal resources. Recognizing their dilemma, the GoK took the necessary steps to reform its energy sector, and they managed to create attractive FDI opportunities, as evident by France's October 2009 funding announcement (see paragraph three). Kenya exists as an example within eastern Africa of "if you build (reform) it, they (investors) will come." As USG agencies develop strategies for international renewable energy engagement, REO encourages policy makers to look to Kenya as a best practices model. USG high level

policy makers should tout Kenya as an example for others in the region to follow, to get Ethiopia and others off the notion that donor countries need to support/assist them in developing their energy sectors. The message is that more than enough investment is

out there to support robust development, as Kenya has proven, but

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only if the environment is conducive to investment.

¶3. (U) France Funds Geothermal in Kenya: According to media reports,

the French government agreed to give 7.2 billion shillings (US \$97 million) to Kenya's Geothermal Development Company (GDC) for the purchase of two rigs and capacity building for the new company. A statement from Kenya's prime minister's office in October 2009 said

that the French government also agreed to increase funding for the Olkaria Geothermal Power project by 5.5 billion shillings (US\$74 million) while pledging to help Kenya shift from reliance on fossil

fuels to green energy. "Geothermal is the white oil of Kenya," says

Jean-Pierre Marcelli, of the Kenyan branch of France's Development Agency (AFD). He says the Kenyan government is connecting about 200,000 people a year. The potential in Kenya is quite high as the country is currently only generating about 150 megawatts of power (of around 1,200) from geothermal. Marcelli says several thousand megawatts could yet be tapped and that Kenya's government is keen to

develop it so as to increase electricity coverage in the country, but also in order to remain economically competitive.

ACROSS ETHIOPIA

¶4. (U) Conservation: Helping the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority: The newly established Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) is mandated by a 2007 proclamation to manage Ethiopia's most important protected areas, as defined by those areas

that contain the greatest biodiversity and/or are transboundary. Under the mandate, EWCA is responsible for 15 national parks, 4 wildlife sanctuaries, 8 wildlife reserves, and 18 designated controlled hunting areas. Faced with daunting challenges that include an absence of community participation in wildlife conservation, a lack of coordination between federal and regional stake holders, a lack of clear demarcation of park boundaries and in

turn substantial encroachment, and a lack of attention for the subsector as a development agenda, EWCA is working to enhance its capacity in order to create a sustainable management system for the

wildlife and protected areas. In the coming years, EWCA seeks to redemarcate and legalize the existing national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, strengthen wildlife protection in order to improve the

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management of endangered and endemic wildlife species, and to maximize income from sustainable utilization of wildlife and protected areas. Income utilization could include revenue from the tourism industry as well as ecosystem services such as forestry projects from carbon mitigation/adaption funds. Because EWCA is a fledgling institution with substantial organizational limitations, including inadequate budget, and substantial gaps in both skills and

knowledge of current staff, the Regional Environment Office in eastern Africa based out of Addis Ababa in Ethiopia is attempting to

identify appropriate USG resources in order to facilitate potential

partnerships with EWCA. In this regard, Regional Environment Associate, Ira Hersh, is reaching out to contacts at the US Fish and

Wildlife Service, the US Forestry Service, the National Parks Service, etc.

15. (U) Peace Corps to Launch Environment and Conservation Program in

Ethiopia: Peace Corps Ethiopia is in the process of expanding its activities by starting a new sector in environment to complement its

existing Health program. Peace Corps' involvement in the health sector has played a contributory role toward the realization of Ethiopia's Millennium Development goals in the health sector, but the

country remains behind in reaching the goals within the Environment

sector. Consequently, beginning September 2010, Peace Corps Ethiopia

plans to launch the Conservation and Natural Resource Management (CNRM) sector based on the demand to fill the gaps within this important and rapidly growing field. Conservation International has

listed Ethiopia as part of the Eastern Afromontane biodiversity hotspots (Conservation International), and the conservation of such

spaces in addition to other ecologically important areas is paramount to the growth and progress of Ethiopia. The goal of Peace

Corps Ethiopia's Conservation and Natural Resource Management Program

(CNRMP) is to identify, support and disseminate promising practices

that will improve the quality of life of Ethiopian people living adjacent to protected areas, while also improving the management of

locally available natural resources. Peace Corps organized a December

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22, 2009 stakeholders meeting to officially introduce the United States Peace Corps Ethiopia CNRM program. In order to further strengthen Peace Corps' collaborative partnership in this critical area of development, Peace Corps Ethiopia invited government officials, international NGO representatives, members of Ethiopia's

civil society, and USAID and the State Department Regional Environmental Office.

16. (U) Peace Corps representatives briefed the group on the Peace

Corps mandate and objectives and their existing Health Program in Ethiopia, as well as CNRMP program plans and objectives. Feedback was generally positive, with many participants pleased to see attention devoted to Ethiopia's pressing conservation needs. Questions focused on the types of expertise that Peace Corps volunteers will provide, with participants placing a particular emphasis on particular skill sets that include conservation, parks management, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), etc. One criticism that resonated was that the program was perhaps too broad and slightly over ambitious, although Peace Corps staff explained that during planning phases it is preferable to err on the side of inclusiveness. They assured the group that the program will become more refined and targeted over the next months with stakeholder input.

17. (U) The Born Free Foundation Rescues Safia: As reported by USAID staff Jane Strachan in the U.S. Embassy Community Newsletter, The Lion, Jane Strachan learned of and then witnessed a

lioness cub living under less than optimal conditions while traveling to southern Ethiopia. She reported the finding to Born Free Ethiopia's Director and the two worked together to bring the cub back to Addis to be placed in a safer, healthier environment. BFF worked to establish a new temporary home for the lion cub on BFF's new land. BFF has been able to get 73 hectares of land in Menagesha from the Government of Ethiopia to use as a new wildlife center. The perimeter has been staked out and BFF now has trained and uniformed guards patrolling the area while BFF works on installing the perimeter fencing. On November 30th, the cub, named Safia, was moved to her temporary home, where she'll live for a few months while perimeter fencing and a larger permanent enclosure is built on the BFF grounds. The set up is similar to that of a zoo in the U.S., with an indoor

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enclosure where Safia will be at night and then a gate that can be opened so she can be outside or inside as she chooses during the day. In another few months, BFF will have an Open House at Menagesha and will invite families to come have a picnic and investigate the land. There will also be opportunities to do volunteer work that day. And Safia will be there as well. BFF in Ethiopia currently also cares for the lion in the Sidist Kilo zoo, several other lions in temporary homes, two cheetahs, and owl, and several tortoises.

18. (U) Colorado State University Identifies Science and Technology Opportunities in Ethiopia: Representatives from Colorado State University (CSU) visited Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in late December 2009

to host two interactive Geographic Information Science (GIS) and Technology Needs Assessment Workshops. The objective was to identify and prioritize important thematic and technical priorities for sustainable GIS education and training in Ethiopia. Led by Professor Paul Evangelista, the CSU group sought to identify opportunities for U.S. and Ethiopian researchers, academics and students. To evaluate Ethiopian GIS needs and capabilities, CSU sought workshop participant's input relative to five priority areas: application priorities, technical and training priorities, enabling technology priorities, and capacity improvement priorities. Application Priority Areas included renewable energy, wildlife management,

groundwater, watershed management, food security, infrastructure and asset management, community mapping, park/protected area management, health/epidemiology, and urban planning. Technical and Training Priority Areas focused on modeling, data collection, data modeling and database design, basic GIS analysis, remote sensing, GPS, landcover mapping, spatial decision support, and programming and scripting. Enabling Technology Priority Areas targeted hardware and software, SDSS development, online training opportunities, repository/clearinghouse/SDI development, and internet connectivity.

¶9. (U) Evangelista has been working in Ethiopia for over ten years and has established relationships at the Addis Ababa University, Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), and others. In March 2009, Evangelista brought several CSU colleagues to Ethiopia

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to meet with counterparts and assess the potential to develop a CSU multi-disciplinary program to address Ethiopia's critical needs. While GIS has been a reoccurring subject in Ethiopia, it is only one of many subjects CSU hopes to address through Evangelista. To date, NSF has provided CSU a small grant to facilitate their activities, but CSU is continually challenged by a lack of resources and seeks out other sources for support. The workshop validated the assumption that Ethiopia's GIS training needs are vast. CSU staff will work to use information garnered throughout the course of the workshop to narrow down targeted areas where they can provide valued added training and expertise. Evangelista said it will be vital that CSU identify the appropriate partners as they move forward in their endeavors, seeking REO guidance and recommendations on how best to engage government agencies.

WATER MATTERS

¶10. (U) Nile Basin Initiative Celebrates 10-Year Anniversary; And the Next Ten? The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) celebrated its 10th Anniversary Ceremony in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, December 6-8, 2009.

The event itself lacked the contention that has come to characterize NBI meetings as they struggle with negotiations aimed at institutionalizing mechanisms to establish a permanent river basin organization that includes all Nile Basin countries. Speakers called for cooperation moving forward, frequently referring to the need for inclusiveness. The celebration was held in the shadows of the next Nile Council of Ministers (NileCOM) meeting, scheduled to take place in early 2010 in Egypt. Decisions taken at this next NileCOM meeting will be pivotal regarding the future direction of the NBI, with potentially significant legal and financial implications. Consensus was that upper riparians are generally interested in development and don't want to see future NBI assistance in jeopardy. A few countries (Kenya, possibly Tanzania) appear to be manipulating the NBI

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contentions for political gain, pandering to nationalistic

tendencies regarding sensitivities surrounding the Nile waters. The next NileCOM meeting, however, will most likely be characterized by a showdown between Egypt and Ethiopia, with high level political brinkmanship up to the last minute. Egypt appears to have adopted a charm campaign to discourage riparian countries from signing the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) at the next NileCOM appears to be an ambitious charm campaign. Tanzania and Egypt recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding where Egypt has agreed to carry out research on underground water in Tanzania, drill more boreholes in Tanzania to alleviate shortages of water, and to provide for the exchange of skilled professionals in water management such as water engineers and students.

¶11. (U) Egypt's Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif visited Ethiopia the last week of December 2009, accompanied by ministers of electricity and energy, transport, trade and industry, health, and international cooperation, in addition to representatives from 75 Egyptian companies. Moreover, Egypt will launch an investment fund in Africa with a capital of USD 1.3 billion and Egypt Air agreed to operate a new line between Cairo and Addis Ababa with one trip every week. The stated objective of these Egypt-Ethiopia initiatives is to "open new horizons for cooperation and integration between the two countries," with Egypt's Minister of Water Allam explaining that he did not participate in the December 2009 visit so that it wouldn't appear like "a visit for the Nile." (Comment: It's always about the water, particularly when there is excessive protest to the contrary. Between Egypt's interest in Ethiopia and Tanzania, coupled with possible irrigation system development for agriculture in Uganda and beyond, Egypt appears to be offering to provide development/economic benefits to those willing to stand down regarding the CFA. End Comment.) For more details, see ADDIS ABAB ¶2951.

¶12. (U) Nile Basin Initiative in Review: The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) was launched in 1999 to develop the Nile basin in a cooperative

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manner, to encourage the sharing of its substantial socioeconomic benefits throughout the Nile basin region, and to promote regional peace and security. To date, it has transformed behaviors and perceptions in the region and recent analysis demonstrates there is sufficient water for planned developments if there is cooperation.

The NBI includes ten member states: Ethiopia, Egypt, Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, and

Eritrea as an observer and is supported by a World Bank-managed, multi-donor funded trust fund that is due to expire in 2012. Events

are fast-paced in the run up to the 2012 expiration date, with pressure mounting for a resolution on the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA), or similar binding legal mechanism, needed to establish a permanent river basin organization. The next NBI meeting is the Nile Council of Ministers (NileCOM) meeting scheduled to take

place in Cairo, Egypt at the end of February or beginning of March ¶2010. During the July 2009 NileCOM meeting in Alexandria, Egypt, the Nile Basin countries agreed to postpone a decision on the CFA for

six months. The outstanding issue centers on Article 14 of the CFA. Article 14 addresses water security; a contentious issue whereby Egypt and Sudan seek text to ensure protection of their 'current uses and rights' while upper riparian countries want to abrogate existing, colonial era agreements. At the upcoming 2010 NileCOM meeting, it is a real possibility that seven upper riparian countries may sign the CFA, opting to move forward without Egypt and Sudan. Such a decision could have legal and financial implications for the future of the NBI, given that the river basin institution's credibility as a regional body will likely depend upon inclusiveness. Sustaining NBI accomplishments and modernizing Africa for the future will require a permanent commitment from all NBI member states.

CLIMATE CHANGE

¶13. (U) In the aftermath of the December 2009 United Nations Framework Convention's Fifteenth Conference of the Parties (COP15) meeting in Copenhagen, Ethiopia has mixed reactions to the Accord.

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As Chair of the African Union (AU) Conference of African Heads of State and Governments on Climate Change (CAHOSCC), Ethiopian PM Meles was named head of the African delegation of over 50 countries in August 2009. The AU-sanctioned African position advanced by Meles consisted of three major elements: adaptation, mitigation, and technology transfer. The African negotiating position initially called for \$200 billion in adaptation funds annually beginning in 2020, it demanded that developed countries to cut their carbon emissions by 40 to 45% of 1990 levels by 2020, and it pressed for technology transfers with relaxed international property rights (IPR). By the end of the conference on December 18, 2009, the Africa delegation accepted the European Union and United States' position on adaptation financing in the amount of \$100 billion annually beginning in 2020. On emission reduction, Africa continues to press the developed world to commit to cutting emissions by 40 to 45 percent of 1990 levels by 2020, although actual country pledges in Copenhagen did not reach these figures. The Africa delegation's objectives regarding technology transfers were not clearly articulated and were largely subsumed by adaptation funds and mitigation percentage negotiations.

¶14. (U) Disappointed by what were viewed as insufficient carbon emission reduction pledges from developed nations, and adaptation financing figures lower than many had hoped, some media reports declare that Ethiopia's Meles "sold out Africa." Government officials from Ethiopia's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) counter that that Africa asserted its position under Meles in Copenhagen and Africa's climate change challenges were recognized and validated by the international community at the conference. In the EPA's estimation, the Africa delegation "got what we asked for (in terms of adaptation funding amounts), it was the prime focus and they (developed countries) accepted." According to the EPA, Meles was awarded the amount he proposed; an amount that CAHOSCC agreed to in advance of the conference and one that took global political and economic factors into account. To further address criticisms that the

figure is too low, the EPA describes the \$100 billion sum as a first step toward "reconciling;" that it should be positively viewed as a

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goodwill gesture that demonstrates developed countries' understanding of Africa's plight.

¶15. (U) Regardless, civil society continues to assert that \$100 billion annually beginning in 2020 for adaptation measures is not science-based and is too low, particularly once it is divided among the many developing countries throughout the world to which it applies. Climate change activists also argue that current carbon emission pledges are not science-based and will have to reach the 40 percent figure if we are to meet a two degree temperature reduction objective agreed to in Copenhagen. Persuading countries to pledge meaningful mitigation numbers, according to Ethiopia's civil society, will require U.S. leadership. An Ethiopian environmental civil society NGO, the Forum for Environment, launched a climate change campaign in November 2009 where they collected more than two million signatures for a petition calling on the U.S. to take on a more active leadership role in Copenhagen and beyond.

¶16. (U) Despite media reports that highlight discontent with the Meles-led delegation to Copenhagen, and Ethiopia's civil society disappointments with the Accord, the general consensus is that the Meles-led Africa delegation met with mild success in Copenhagen. Civil society and government officials alike recognize that significant work needs to be done in the months and years ahead to ensure the establishment of a robust international agreement, one they hope will transition from the present Accord to an internationally legally binding document. The majority of voices in Ethiopia, both from the government and civil society, view Copenhagen as a first step toward that end objective. With climate change issues now on the table, coupled with U.S. engagement, most in Ethiopia agree that the international community is moving in the right direction. For more details, see ADDIS ABAB 3026.

REO UPCOMING TRAVEL

¶17. (U) The Regional Environment Officer and Regional Environment Associate for eastern Africa will travel to Madagascar January 7-14, 2010 for an orientation visit and to Cairo, Egypt January 18-22 for an Office of Naval Research-hosted science and technology workshop.

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